



Downtown Vernal Façade Grant



Example of various types of downtown façades.

Summary

Vernal City, in partnership with Uintah County Economic Development, is offering a matching grant to eligible businesses to assist with exterior improvements to business façades. The purpose of the façade grant is to promote the enhancement, restoration, improved aesthetics and renovation of the exterior of commercial structures in the downtown area. The façade grants support the revitalization of our downtown and economic development of Uintah County as a whole. Vernal City developed and administers this grant program.

The approval of the grant funds is based on the availability of funds. Grants will be awarded on a first come-first serve basis and in accordance with the process defined below. The awarding of façade grants is entirely at the discretion of Vernal City staff and City Council. The façade grant is a matching grant and will be paid out upon submission of receipts for costs incurred by property owner / manager for the approved project up to the approved award amount.

There are several criteria that must be met for a proposed improvement project to qualify for the façade grant. Applicants are encouraged to read through all of the qualifications before applying and to fill out the application form completely, including all supporting attachments. When the application is submitted, additional documentation may be required in order for the application to be deemed complete and eligible by the façade Grant Review Committee and Vernal City staff.

Grant Eligibility

Applicants must meet all the eligibility requirements listed below at the time of application.

1. The property must be located within the boundaries shown on Appendix A attached to this document. The defined area is the approved Downtown Community Reinvestment Area (CRA).
2. The façade grant must be used to enhance an existing, new or expanded structure on the property. For new construction, the façade grant can be used for exterior finishes only, not framing and structural elements.
3. The structure on the property must be zoned appropriately for the current use. The use within the structure must be as a mixed-use or commercial use (retail, office, hotel, services). Properties zoned for residential use only are not eligible.
4. The property must not have any outstanding Vernal City Code violations.
5. The property and applicant must be in good standing with the Uintah County Assessor's Office in regard to real property taxes and personal property taxes.
6. The applicant must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Property has a business that operates with a current and valid business license for the property. Sales tax and transient room taxes payments must be current. Exception given to a vacant building.
 - b. The property is in good standing with the Utah State Tax Commission. Exception given to a vacant building.
7. Proposed projects cannot be for improvements already completed, under active construction, or with an approved building permit at the time of application.
8. The applicant must be the property owner or a tenant with a valid lease and owner approval.
9. Property has not received grant payments amounting to \$100,000 within the last 18 months. Applicant must wait for at least 18 months from the last payment which cumulatively totalled \$100,000.

Grant parameters

1. Façade grant funds will provide reimbursement for up to 40% (forty percent) of the incurred cost of an eligible improvement project. For example, if the total incurred project cost is \$10,000, the matching grant will reimburse \$4,000 of the project. The remaining \$6,000 is to be covered by the grant recipient.
2. Minimum total project cost is \$2,000. The lowest matching grant available is \$800.
3. Maximum reimbursement is \$100,000 per project regardless of the overall project cost. For example, if the project totals \$300,000, the matching grant will cover up to \$100,000 with the grant recipient funding the remaining \$200,000.
4. The grant reimbursement is based on the actual cost of the improvement or renovation. Estimates or bids at the time of application only reserves the grant award and may not reflect the exact reimbursement. Volunteer work by the owner, manager or others is not reimbursable and should not be included in the owner match.

5. The applicant will receive an award letter showing the approved grant amount.
6. The grant will be paid as a reimbursement when the project is complete as described in the approved application, inspected and the associated building permit closed.
7. For larger scale projects with grant amounts of \$50,000 or greater, the reimbursement may be submitted in two requests, but no more than 50% of the grant award can be granted in the first reimbursement.
8. Applicants are required to submit before and after pictures of their project to the City. The City has permission to use the photos for downtown promotion and other city purposes.

Eligible façade Improvements:

1. All sides of the building exterior including the exterior treatments for new construction / expansion of a structure
2. Doors and windows
3. Paint
4. Siding and trim. Siding made of vinyl or aluminum siding is not eligible.
5. Awnings
6. Parking lots, repairs and seal coat
7. Sidewalks, exterior ADA features and curbing
8. Internal walkway that connects two public locations
9. Restoration of existing exteriors and traditional storefronts
10. Restoration of existing historic signage
11. Soffit, fascia cornices and balconies
12. Attached lighting and decorative lighting
13. Patios, pergolas and outdoor public spaces, including permanent fixtures
14. Gutters and downspouts
15. Dumpster / trash enclosures and screening
16. Removal of dilapidated and damaged items
17. Removal of non-historic façades
18. Screening of mechanical equipment and utility equipment
19. Permanent bicycle racks
20. Permanent landscaping and planter boxes
21. Entrance and parking improvements facilitating accessibility
22. Directly related architectural and design fees
23. New signage that meets criteria in Exhibit B

Ineligible Improvements or projects:

1. Interior improvements
2. Murals
3. Buildings/property that are tax exempt (funds are generated from taxable properties)
4. Roofs, reroof, shingles
5. Parking lot striping

6. Siding comprised of vinyl and aluminum lap siding
7. Detached signage / pole signs
8. Storage buildings and sheds
9. Purchase of real property
10. Furnishings, portable structures, portable equipment and other supplies
11. Heating, cooling components and water heaters
12. Utility facilities and meters
13. Projects and materials determined by the Review Committee that do not meet the purposes of the façade grant and the vision of the Downtown Plan.

Design Requirements and Project Purpose

- Façade improvements should make a noticeable contribution to neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- The proposed design should be consistent with the character of the neighboring properties.
- Façade improvements should support and enhance pedestrian accessibility. Signs, windows, doors, and lighting should be pedestrian oriented.
- Improvements are to conform to local and national historic district guidelines, if applicable.
- Significant architectural features should be repaired and preserved rather than replaced. If replacement is required, design and materials should be consistent with the original historic character of the building.

Grant Review and Approval Process

Upon receipt of a complete application package, the proposed project will be reviewed by the façade Grant Review Committee composed of three individuals appointed by the Vernal City Council. Various project components, such as the type of signage, the colors of paint, and the types of materials proposed, will be examined to ensure that the proposed project enhances the downtown in a manner that is consistent with the goals of Vernal City and the Vernal Downtown Plan. Modifications to an application may be required or an application may be rejected entirely on the basis of these subjective criteria. Enhancement projects must be composed of quality materials. The Review Committee may request additional information and documentation to clarify details of the proposed project. Grant parameters and eligibility is subject to change. The grant application will be evaluated on the parameters at the time of a complete submission. The façade Grant Review Committee may solicit input from the State's Historic Preservation Office to ensure proper treatment of historic structures. Grant applicants acknowledge that they are willing to assist the City and the Downtown Vernal Alliance in responding to surveys capturing data (such as job numbers, private building investment) used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Downtown Revitalization programs.

Appeal

If the applicant is not funded or rejected in part or in whole, the applicant may appeal the decision of the Review Committee to the Vernal City Council. The award of any grant monies is entirely at the discretion of Vernal City.

Reimbursement

For approved grants, reimbursement will be paid out upon the demonstration of a complete project as outlined in the approved application. Documentation of funds expended by the applicant will be required, as well as an on-site inspection by Vernal City staff. Documentation may include paid invoice, receipt, canceled check or other proof of expenditure. Additional documentation may be required as well, such as a successful final inspection or Certificate of Occupancy obtained from the Vernal City Building Department. Should a project not be completed in accordance with the documentation attached to the application as approved in the award letter, the grant funds may not be paid or paid in part.

The applicant is required to submit before and after pictures of their project with the reimbursement documentation. Permission is granted to the City to use the photos for downtown promotion and city purposes.

Modifications to the application may be approved by the Review Committee in writing before the changes are incorporated into actual construction. Total reimbursements may exceed the award amount by up to 10%. Requests for reimbursement above 10% of the award amount in the award letter must be approved in writing by the Review Committee. For projects with a grant amount of \$50,000 or greater, the reimbursement request may be submitted in two requests, but no more than 50% of the grant award can be granted in the first reimbursement.

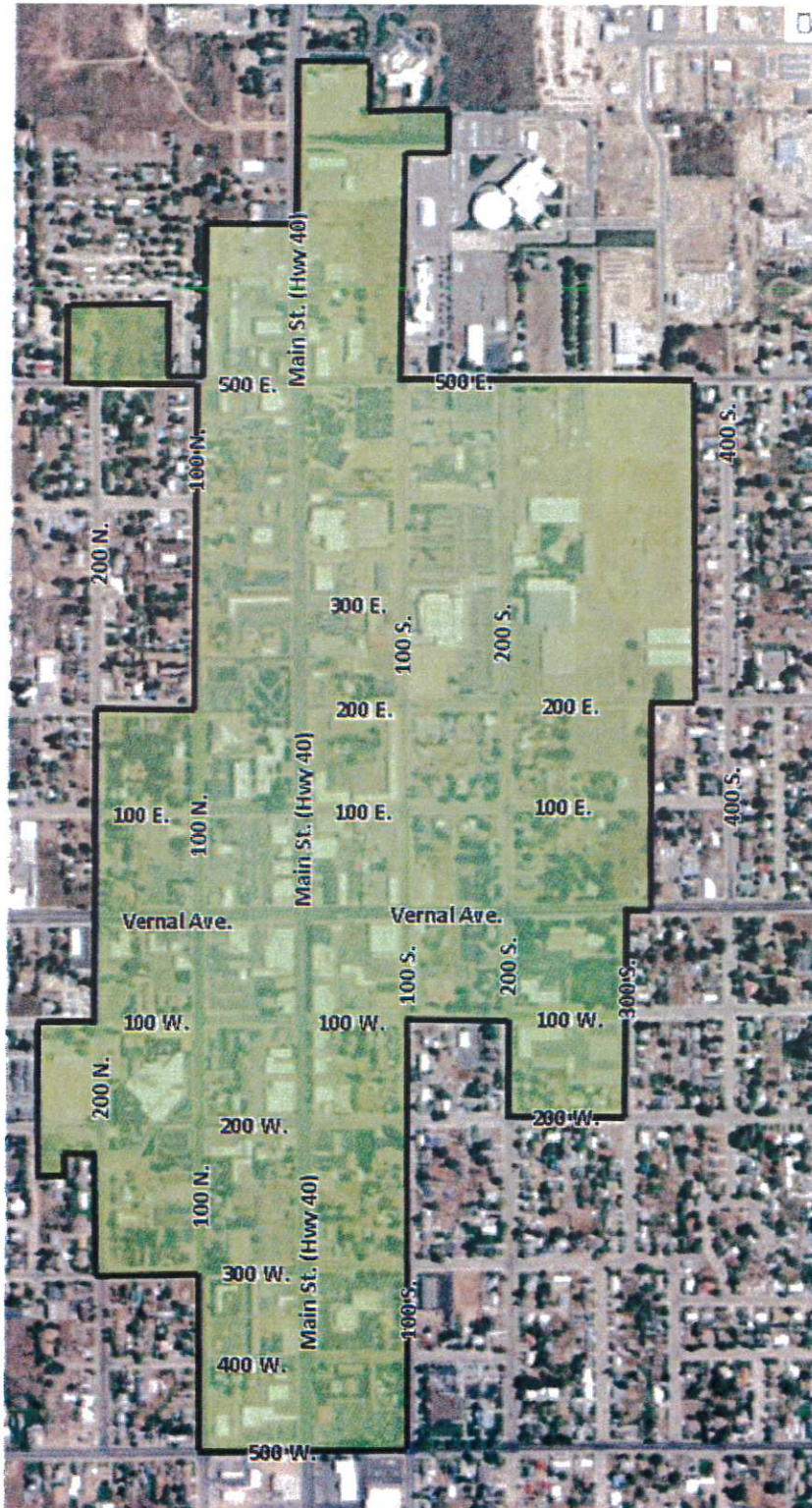
Project Completion

A project must start construction with proper permits within six months of grant application approval. The request for final grant reimbursement must be submitted within 12 months of grant approval. If such deadlines are not met, the grant award will be forfeited unless an extension is approved in writing by the Façade Grant Review Committee.

Final Approval

Preliminary approval will be given by the Review Committee upon review and acceptance of a project application. A final grant award approval letter will be issued at the time the applicant has an approved and valid building permit (if required for the project).

Appendix A - CRA Boundary
Matching grant eligible properties



Appendix B - Signage

Matching façade grant will fund the following signage projects. All signs must meet City sign code.



Blade signs



Illuminated signs meeting City sign code



Monument signage



- Wall signs
- Painted signs
- Reuse of pole sign with lights and art
- Awning signs

Matching façade grant will not fund the following sign types:



Pole signs and billboards
Wall signs, roof mounted
Wall signs made of stiff cardboard
Painted plywood or similar board
Reader Boards
Murals
Banners
Temporary sign
Off premises sign



GRANT APPLICATION

Façade Improvement

374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078
www.vernalcity.org

Phone (435) 789-2255
FAX (435) 789-2256

Fill out completely INCLUDING ALL SIGNATURES. Include any appropriate supplemental documentation.
THE AWARDING OF GRANTS IS BASED ON AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

SITE INFORMATION: Site must be within the boundaries of the Downtown Community Reinvestment Area (CRA).	
Address(s):	
County Parcel Number(s):	
Property Owner(s):	
Business(s) on Site:	

PROJECT INFORMATION: Attach documents, such as bids and estimates, demonstrating costs. This grant may be used to reimburse up to forty percent (40%) of the cost of the project with a maximum total disbursement of \$100,000 regardless of total project cost. The minimum eligible total project cost is \$2,000 (grant total of \$800).	
Total Cost of Project (estimate):	
Source of estimate (contractor bid, owner estimate, architect estimate, other):	
Proposed Start Date:	Proposed Completion Date:

APPLICANT	
Name:	
Address:	Telephone:
	email:
I certify that this information, including any attachments, is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the award of any amount of grant is fully at the discretion of Vernal City and its appointed agents. I further understand that other applications and permits may be required for this project, such as a building permit.	
Signature (applicant):	Date:
I have read and understand the current Downtown Vernal Façade Grant program.	
Signature (property owner):	Date:

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Number _____ Date _____ By _____
Grant Awarded (y/n) _____ Amount: _____ Cross Reference _____
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Information may be requested as needed.

REVIEW AND COMMENTS (to be completed by the Review Committee)	
Date and Time Received:	
Date and Time Deemed Complete:	
50% Grant Eligible (yes/no)	Amount of Grant Available at 50%:
Comments: 	

Application Number _____ Date _____ By _____

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